

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

With respect to the indication in the Office Action that the Information Disclosure Statements (IDS) filed on November 20, 2003 and February 4, 2004 were considered in part, applicants believe that the Information Disclosure Statements should have been completely considered. Specifically, the Office Action indicates that reference A0 filed with the IDS of November 20, 2003, has not been considered. However, applicants note that as indicated in that IDS each of the references cited therein was provided in the parent application serial no. 09/732,723, and thus it is submitted that each reference should have been properly considered. Thus, applicants respectfully request confirmation of considered of each reference cited in the IDS.

The Title is amended by the present response to be more clearly directed to the claimed invention.

The disclosure is amended to address the objection at page 7, line 17 noted in prenumbered paragraph 2 in the Office Action.

The claims are amended to address the objections noted in prenumbered paragraph 3 in the Office Action.

Further, by the present Amendment the claims are amended to recite subject matter indicated as allowable in the outstanding Office Action.

More particularly, in the Office Action claims 5 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. patent 6,635,530 to Helm et al. (herein “Helm”). Claims 8 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Helm. Claims 6, 9, and 10 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were noted as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of the allowable subject matter in claims 6, 9, and 10.

With respect to that indication of allowable subject matter, claim 6 is amended by the present response to now be rewritten in independent form, and thus now independent claim 6, and claims 9 and 10 dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

Further, each of rejected and withdrawn claims 5, 7, 8, and 11-13 are canceled by the present response without prejudice.

The present response also sets forth new claims 14-16 for examination. Support for those new claims is believed to be clear from the original disclosure, including the original claims, and those claims are also believed to set forth allowable subject matter.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

EHK:SNS\la

Surinder Sachar
Eckhard H. Kuesters
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 28,870
Surinder Sachar
Registration No. 34,423